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FBI looks for source of classified leak

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The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been attempting to track down the government employee who leaked to The New York Times the text of a "Top Secret" national security document giving detailed plans for eliminating Soviet and Cuban influence in Central America and the Caribbean.

The Washington Times learned yesterday that the decision to call in

the FBI was made by National Security Adviser William P. Clark after The New York Times' April 7 editions carried a half-page text of the ultrasensitive document. It essentially gives the details of what was recommended in a summary paper after a meeting of the National Security Planning Group last April.

President Reagan himself approved the basic policy of preventing the proliferation of Cuban-model states that might prove a military and economic

threat to the United States. The policy included a program of overt and covert plans to prevent the Sandinista government of Nicaragua from exporting revolution to El Salvador, and for strengthening the governments of both El Salvador and Guatemala. The secret document was an off-shoot of National Security Decision Directive 17, approved by Reagan in November 1981, for action in Central America, especially in Nicaragua.

A well-informed White House

source said the leaking of the document to the newspaper was the worst security breach of the Reagan administration and has outraged the highest levels of government. The document, according to the official, apparently was photocopied before it was put in the hands of The New York Times, and all the standard headings were removed in an effort to safeguard the identity of the leaker.

The NSC document was under extraordinarily close hold within

several departments of the government, including the White House, the NSC, the State Department, the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency.

No more than 20 officials were authorized to see the document or even to be aware of its existence. However, it is considered probable that an equal number of secretaries also would have had clearance to handle the document.

The FBI is interviewing everyone who would have had official

reasons for access to the document. Under existing law covering classified documents, the FBI may use polygraph, or lie-detection, devices if a prime suspect is found. The FBI also would be authorized to use the "black box" on every federal employee with any access to the document, although this is considered not likely to happen.

"There is no question but that the document is an authentic copy of

the real thing," said one White House official. "We believe the document was given to The New York Times by someone in government who opposes the president's policy on Cuba and Central America in hopes that the publicity would force the administration to back away from its efforts to counter the spread of Marxism in this hemisphere."

The United States has no official secrets act of comparable severity to that in Great Britain but a convicted security violator could receive a jail sentence of up to five years as well as a \$10,000 fine.

This is the first known occasion in which the FBI has been called in to investigate a security breach in the Reagan administration.

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